

A. Agassiz

MUSEUM OF COMPARATIVE ZOOLOGY,
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

My dear May

I hardly know how to
express my feelings of regret at
the action of the Trustees of the
Peabody Museum in sending the
name of Putnam to the Impera-
tor as Professor of Archaeology.

While fully realizing the
difficulties of the case and the
peculiar relations of the Trustees
to the University, I cannot help
looking at his appointments
as a distinct lowering of the
standard of a scientific Profes-
sorship to the University. No one
is more ready to admit than I am

The excellent qualities of Putnam
as a collector and as a curator
are so I wish to detract in any
way from his devotion to the ~~best~~
interests of the Peabody Museum
But are you ready to reward ^{more} ~~his~~ ^{his}
loyal devotion by promotion to a
Professorship above of all others,
requires that its incumbent
should have the widest possible
culture? of he is to represent before
the scientific world American
archaeology as it should be represented.
Surely the grounds on which this
nominations is urged have not
your sanction as representing the
highest interests of science and you
cannot be ready to place on Myman's
Professorship a man of Putnam's

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caliber? The establishment of a
Professorship is not going to alter
Putnam's relations to the Peabody
Museum while it does not meet
cases so often the case with other
appointments - a crying want.
There are no students or pupils
clamoring for instruction and
asking to have the machine kept
going by the appointment of the
best available man. The Museum
will be as well taken care of by
Putnam as Curator - and I cannot
help feeling that such an appoint-
ment is offering a premium to
deserted mediocrity and is to a
certain extent a mark of want of

appreciation on the part of the
governing Boards of the latter work
which is attempted here.

I have been perfectly frank
with you in this matter as I do not
wish to seem to you or to any other
members of the Trustees to be acting
in an under hand way or my
opposition to their action.

Yours truly
A. Cassin

Pupsee Asa Gray.
Cambridge.

[Faint, illegible handwriting, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]